

REMARKS

Claims 4-8 and 13-20 are pending in this application. Claims 4, 5 and 7 are amended, and claims 1-3, 9-12 and 21-23 are canceled by this amendment without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicants are pleased to note the Examiner indicated that claims 13-20 are allowed and claims 4-6 and 8 are allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have rewritten claim 4 in independent form including all the limitations of base claim 1. Therefore, claim 4 is now in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

Entry of this amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 as the amendments:

(a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein;
(b) do not raise any new issues that would require further consideration and/or search as the Applicants merely put claim 4 in independent form and thus in form for allowance and amended claims 5 and 7 to depend only from allowable claim 4.

The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented as they are in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 7 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tetsuka *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 06-061153A) in view of Hama *et al.* (US Pat. No. 5,525,159) and Oyama (Japanese Patent Publication 02-237020).

Claims 1 and 23 have been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection of claims 1 and 23 under § 103(a) is rendered moot.

Claim 7 has been amended to depend only from allowable claim 4. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 7 is allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 7 and 23 under § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tetsuka *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 06-061153A) in view of Hama *et al.* (US Pat. No. 5,525,159)

and Oyama (Japanese Patent Publication 02-237020) as applied to claims 1, 7 and 23 above and further in view of Otani *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 06-260434).

Claim 2 has been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection of claim 2 under § 103(a) is rendered moot.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tetsuka *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 06-061153A) in view of Hama *et al.* (US Pat. No. 5,525,159), Oyama (Japanese Patent Publication 02-237020), and Otani *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 06-260434) as applied to claim 2, and further in view of Omi *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 11-302824).

Claim 3 has been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection of claim 3 under § 103(a) is rendered moot.

Claim 21-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tetsuka *et al.* (Japanese Patent Publication 06-061153A) in view of Hama *et al.* (US Pat. No. 5,525,159), and Oyama (Japanese Patent Publication 02-237020) as applied to claims 1, 7 and 23, and further in view of Matsuda *et al.* (US Patent No. 6,189,485).

Claims 21-22 have been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection of claims 21-22 under § 103(a) is rendered moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, the claims are now in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. If any point remains in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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